

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-15 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 IO-14
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R 100830Z JAN 78
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TO AMEMBASSY PARIS
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6857
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, OVIP, IV, FR
SUBJECT: INTERVIEW OF PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING

1. IN PREPARATION FOR GISCARD'S VISIT, IVORIAN MEDIA
HAVE BEEN SATURATING IVORY COAST WITH NEWS, ARTICLES,
REVIEWS AND RADIO/TV PROGRAMS ON FRANCE AND FRENCH-
IVORIAN RELATIONS. TWO DAYS PRIOR TO GISCARD'S ARRIVAL,
"FRATERNITE MATIN" HAS PUBLISHED AN "EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW"
WITH THE FRENCH PRESIDENT. SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FOLLOW:

2. GISCARD BEGAN INTERVIEW STATING THAT, WHILE THERE
IS CONFLICT IN MANY PARTS OF AFRICA, IVORY COAST UNDER
THE LEADERSHIP OF HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY IS AT PEACE, STABLE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. HIS VISIT OF FIVE
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DAYS, "ONE OF THE LONGEST EVER TAKEN BY A FRENCH PRESI-
DENT ABROAD," WILL GIVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO REALLY
SEE IVORY COAST.

3. FRENCH-IVORIAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION: GISCARD STATED
THAT IVORY COAST WAS PRINCIPAL RECIPIENT OF GOF ASSISTANCE;
BUT THAT IVORY COAST IS A COUNTRY WHICH RELIES MOST ON

ITSELF. AS AN EXAMPLE OF EXTENT OF FRENCH ASSISTANCE, GISCARD STATED ONE-THIRD OF FRENCH COOPERANTS OF MINISTRY OF COOPERATION SERVE IN IVORY COAST.

4. GISCARD'S PROPOSAL FOR AN EUROPEAN-AFRICAN SOLIDARITY PACT:

ASKED TO EXPAND ON HIS PROPOSAL OF LAST JUNE AND TO REPORT ON ITS STATUS, GISCARD REPLIED IT WAS BASED ON TWO CONSIDERATIONS: THE NEED TO CREATE A NEW WEB OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS OF INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN STATES AS THE ERA OF DECOLONIZATION NEARS ITS END; AND THE EXISTENCE OF A COMMUNITY OF CLOSE AND NATURAL INTERESTS BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA. IT WAS A LONG-TERM PROJECT AND NOT MEANT TO CHALLENGE THE REGIONAL GROUPINGS ALREADY IN EXISTENCE. AS TO THE STATUS OF HIS PROPOSAL, GISCARD SAID THE REACTIONS OF AFRICAN LEADERS HAVE BEEN POSITIVE, AND THAT THE EUROPEAN REACTIONS "HAD NOT BEEN NEGATIVE." THE PROPOSAL IS BEING STUDIED WITH INTEREST AMONG CERTAIN OF FRANCE'S PARTNERS.

5. AN AFRICA FOR AFRICANS: ASKED WHAT FRANCE INTENDS TO DO FOR THE SECURITY OF AFRICA, GISCARD REPLIED THAT, PRECISELY BECAUSE AFRICA MUST BE FOR AFRICANS IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO DEVOTE ITS RESOURCES TO DEVELOPMENT, "FRANCE HAD BEEN LED TO AFFIRM THE PRINCIPLE ACCORDING TO WHICH UNCLASSIFIED

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ALL AFRICAN STATES HAVE THE RIGHT TO SECURITY WITHIN THEIR FRONTIERS." THUS, THE LOGISTICAL ASSISTANCE FRANCE GAVE ZAIRE DURING THE SHABA AFFAIR AND THE PRESENCE OF FRENCH FORCES IN DJIBOUTI AT THE REQUEST OF THE DJIBOUTIANS. FRANCE ALSO PROVIDES TECHNICAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO A NUMBER OF AFRICAN STATES THAT HAVE REQUESTED IT. FINALLY, FRANCE HAS DEFENSE AGREEMENTS WITH A CERTAIN NUMBER OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES WITH WHICH SHE HAS CLOSE TIES, PARTICULARLY THE IVORY COAST. FRANCE WILL ABIDE BY HER COMMITMENTS.

IN RESPONSE TO A RELATED QUESTION ON SOVIET AFRICAN POLICY, GISCARD STATED THAT FOR AFRICANS TO PURSUE THEIR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, THEY MUST BE FREE TO CHOOSE THEIR MEANS WITHOUT BECOMING AN OBJECT OF FOREIGN IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICTS. MOREOVER, FRANCE VIEWS WITH GROWING CONCERN THE NUMBER OF CONFLICTS THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN RECENT MONTHS WHICH HAVE OFTEN BEEN AGGRAVATED BY EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE.

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6. NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE: GISCARD STATED THAT THE CIEC WHICH COMPLETED ITS WORK SIX MONTHS AGO HAS MARKED A FUNDAMENTAL STAGE BECAUSE IT HAS REINFORCED THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES AND THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. SOME NOT UNIMPORTANT RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED OF WHICH AFRICA IS PERHAPS THE CHIEF BENEFICIARY IN THE AREA OF RESOURCE TRANSFERS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND RAW MATERIALS. FOR FUTURE DISCUSSIONS TO BE SUCCESSFUL, IT IS NECESSARY THAT THE ENTIRE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SHOW IMAGINATION AND REALISM.

7. SOUTH AFRICA: GISCARD STATED FRANCE PROVIDES NO ASSISTANCE WHATSOEVER TO SOUTH AFRICA. SHE MAINTAINS STATE TO STATE RELATIONS WITH PRETORIA, AS SHE DOES WITH OTHER STATES WITH WHOSE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY SHE DOES NOT AGREE. FRANCE
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VOTED FOR THE UNSC RESOLUTION LAST NOVEMBER THAT FORBIDS THE SALE OF ANY MILITARY MATERIAL TO SOUTH AFRICA;

THUS, SHE EVEN CANCELLED THE DLIVERY OF FOUR NAVAL
VESSELS THAT HAD BEEN ALREADY PURCHASED BY PRETORIA.

8. FINALLY, AS REGARDS THE COMORO ISLANDS, GISCARD WAS
ASKED IF FRANCE WOULD MODIFY HER POSITION AS IS DESIRED
BY A MAJORITY OF AFRICAN STATES. GISCARD REPLIED THE
FUTURE OF THE MAHORAIS IS NOT IN THE HANDS OF OTHER
GOVERNMENTS AND CAN ONLY BE DETERMINED BY THE MAHORAIS
THEMSELVES. FRANCE HAS DONE ITS PART TO ASSURE THE
MAHORAIS HAVE THE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE. THEY HAVE FREELY
CHOSEN TWICE, AND IF IN THE FUTURE THE MAHORAIS SHOULD
CHOOSE A RAPPROCHMENT WITH THE REST OF THE ARCHIPELAGO,
FRANCE WOULD NOT OPPOSE IT.

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